

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-70. (Cancelled)

71. (Previously Presented) A game button physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game, the game button comprising:
at least one variable display capable of presenting a plurality of images thereon; and
a memory communicatively coupled with the at least one variable display, the memory adapted to store information for producing the plurality of images presented on the display, the memory being associated solely with the game button and not another game button;
wherein the at least one variable display and the memory are mounted within a game button that is physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game.

72. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 71, wherein the stored information is utilized by the at least one variable display of the game button, and the memory does not allow the stored information to be accessed by another game button.

73. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 71, wherein the at least one variable display is a liquid crystal display.

74. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 71, wherein the memory is included in a microcontroller also including a microprocessor, the microcontroller being communicatively

coupled to the at least one variable display, the microcontroller being associated solely with the game button, the microcontroller controlling the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display.

75. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 74, wherein the microcontroller controls the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display associated with the game button and does not control the presentation of images on any display not associated with the game button.

76. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 74, wherein the microcontroller is communicatively coupled to at least one controller selected from a group consisting of a gaming machine controller, a server controller, and a peer gaming machine controller.

77. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 76, wherein the microcontroller communicates with the controller via a universal serial bus interface.

78. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 74, wherein the microcontroller is communicatively coupled to a server controller, the microcontroller presenting at least one image on the at least one variable display in response to receiving a transmitted signal from the server controller.

79. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 71, wherein the plurality of images form a complex animation pattern.

80-92. (Cancelled)

93. (Previously Presented) A game button physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game, the game button comprising:

an enclosure for mounting components of the game button, the enclosure being

physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game;

at least one variable display capable of presenting a plurality of images thereon, the variable display being located within the enclosure;

a sensor located within the enclosure; and

a memory communicatively coupled with the at least one variable display, the memory adapted to store information for producing the plurality of images presented on the display, the memory being located in the enclosure and being physically located between the variable display and the sensor.

94. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 93, wherein the stored information is utilized by the at least one variable display of the game button, and the memory does not allow the stored information to be accessed by another game button.

95. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 93, wherein the at least one variable display is a liquid crystal display.

96. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 93, wherein the memory is included in a microcontroller also including a microprocessor, the microcontroller being communicatively

coupled to the at least one variable display, the microcontroller being associated solely with the game button, the microcontroller controlling the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display.

97. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 96, wherein the microcontroller controls the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display associated with the game button and does not control the presentation of images on any display not associated with the game button.

98. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 96, wherein the microcontroller is communicatively coupled to at least one controller selected from a group consisting of a gaming machine controller, a server controller, and a peer gaming machine controller.

99. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 98, wherein the microcontroller communicates with the controller via a universal serial bus interface.

100. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 96, wherein the microcontroller is communicatively coupled to a server controller, the microcontroller presenting at least one image on the at least one variable display in response to receiving a transmitted signal from the server controller.

101. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 93, wherein the plurality of images form a complex animation pattern.

102. (Previously Presented) A method for conducting a wagering game via a game button physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game, the method comprising:

providing a button enclosure with mounted components of a game button, the button enclosure being physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game;

presenting one or more images of a plurality of images via at least one variable display located within the button enclosure;

detecting a player input via a sensor located within the button enclosure; and

storing in a memory information for producing the plurality images presented on the display, the memory being communicatively coupled with the at least one variable display and being physically located in the button enclosure between the variable display and the sensor.

103. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising displaying at least one image of the plurality of images based on the information stored in the memory, the information being accessed only by the game button.

104. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising controlling the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display via a microcontroller that is associated solely with the game button, the microcontroller including the memory and being a dedicated microcontroller for the game button.

105. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 104, further comprising communicatively coupled the microcontroller to at least one controller selected from a group consisting of a gaming machine controller, a server controller, and a peer gaming machine controller.

106. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 105, further comprising communicating between the microcontroller and the controller via a universal bus interface.

107. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 104, further comprising presenting at least one image of the plurality of images in response to receiving a transmitted signal from a server controller, the microcontroller being communicatively coupled to the server controller.

108. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising forming a complex animation pattern.

109. (Previously Presented) An intelligent game button having a dedicated microprocessor and being physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game, the game button comprising:

a chassis for mounting components of the game button;

a variable display capable of displaying images thereon, the variable display being mechanically coupled to the chassis;

a sensor for detecting input received from a player, the sensor being mechanically coupled to the chassis; and

a microprocessor communicatively coupled with the variable display, the microprocessor including a memory adapted to store information for producing the images

displayed on the display, the microprocessor being mechanically coupled to the chassis and located between the variable display and the sensor;
wherein the chassis, the variable display, the sensor, and the microprocessor are mounted within an intelligent game button that is physically mounted on or within a gaming machine to receive selections related to a wagering game.

110. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 109, further comprising a legend plate for displaying button game theme artwork to the player, the legend plate being mechanically coupled to the chassis.

111. (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 109, further comprising a plunger-spring assembly mechanically coupled to the chassis and in communication with the sensor, the plunger-spring assembly transmitting a linear motion to the sensor in response to being depressed by the player.

112 (Previously Presented) The game button of claim 109, wherein the sensor is selected from a group consisting of a micro-switch, a Hall-effect sensor, an optic sensor, an eddy current sensor, a resistive sensor, a piezo sensor, and a strain gage sensor.